Abstract

A program specific information data structure facilitates communication of program content and program guide data with attached multimedia objects including audio, video, animation, still image, Internet, Email, text and other types of data. The data structure supports uni-directional communication applications, e.g. passive viewing, and bi-directional communication applications, e.g. interactive type functions. A decoder processes packetized program data and program specific information containing ancillary description information including multimedia object type, location and other descriptive indicators. These indicators are used in acquiring and decoding multimedia objects derived from different sources for presentation in composite video images representing video program content or program guides, for example. Additional ancillary location and acquisition description information enables acquisition of supplementary program specific information elements and program content data.